



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 03/18/2015
Time: 02:00 PM
Location: 309
Committee: House Education

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: SB 1345 RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the department of education to develop a transition plan to end multi-track schedules in public schools and report to the legislature regarding the plan and any proposed legislation. Requires the department of education to give priority to overpopulated schools, including multi-track schools, among capital improvement project appropriation requests submitted to the legislature.

Department's Position:

The Department of Education supports the intent of S.B. No. 1345, and the need to provide adequate classroom capacity to enable schools, which are currently operating on a multi-track schedule, to accommodate full student enrollment within a single-track school year. Multi-track scheduling breaks the school year down into four tracks staggered at three month intervals. When originally instituted, this allowed schools to manage up to 25 percent more students. To decouple these schools from the multi-track schedule would require significant additional capacity to house this additional 25 percent of enrollment. Redistricting may accommodate some of the needed capacity, with the balance provided by the construction of new classroom buildings on existing campuses. Schools that were originally designed for a multi-track schedule would also need to consider the capacity of their support facilities (i.e. cafeteria, library, gym, etc.) and whether these would need to be enlarged to meet the greater on-campus student enrollment.

The cost associated with this initiative is expected to be considerable. Without appropriate funding, the work associated with this bill may be ineffectively protracted across multiple budget cycles.

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Chantal Keliioomalu--UHM Social Work Student & Mother of five in Kapolei Multi-Track school system.

Wed, March 18, 2015

Support for SB1345, Relating to Public Schools. Dept of Edu; Multi-Track Schools; Capital Improvement Projects.

Aloha, my name is Chantal Keliioomalu I am a resident in the Kanehili (most recent of the three) Hawaiian Homes division in Kapolei. We have lived there since June 2010. We have five children in grades—5—8—10—11-- and (12th) just finished GED. The oldest four have all attended the Kapolei Multi-Track schools. At one point we had children simultaneously in the Kapolei Elementary, Middle, and High School. We now have removed all of our children from the Kapolei schools. Currently we have two grandchildren living in our household and attending Kapolei elementary in 1st and 3rd grades.

I am in **Extreme Support of SB1345** to transition all Multi-Track School Systems to traditional school schedules by expanding existing schools and building new schools.

Please know that the Multi-Track system is a chaotic and crazy making system for families forced into them. There are many unintended consequences that impact every crevice of family life. Multi-track schedules cause daily, monthly, and annual scheduling conflicts, rob children of summer-time experiential and cultural learning opportunities, cause financial hardship, restrict residence and or job opportunities, and have no built in safe and affordable childcare situations as would be covered in a traditional schedule.

As a parent the two most prominent issues for me are the **lack of congruence of schedules between the Elementary, Middle, and High School** and an entire generation of children being **robbed of summer-time experiences, memories, trips, and cultural learning opportunities!!**

Incongruent Schedules amongst district schools:

Kapolei Elementary and Middle Schools are on Multi-Track while Kapolei High School is on traditional Single-Track schedule. As hard as it is to schedule around a Multi-Track system--adding to that aggravation is the fact that not all of our children, in the same district, are on the same schedule.

The second Kapolei Elementary is now being built and is scheduled to be open by next school year 2015-16. Both Kapolei elementary schools will be single-track *but* Kapolei middle school will continue (for now) on multi-track. Thusly—Kapolei elementary and high school will be single-track but Kapolei middle school will be multi-track. This is Crazy making.

Robbery. Access Denied to Summer Cultural and Learning Programs:

Imagine the dreams answered to a family to receive a Hawaiian Homes--**IRONICALLY** to discover that your children's new MULTI-TRACK school schedule completely blocks out

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their primary source of cultural experiences and learning from the Kamehameha Explorations Programs Fall and Spring Break and Summer Sessions.

Kamehameha Explorations series has expanded over the last decade from the original one-week summer program after fifth grade--to one or two weeks of camp on outer islands during summer *and* day camp during Fall and Spring breaks running from fifth through tenth grade. These cultural learning programs have shaped who our five children are today. They know their culture, language, songs, chants, sacred places and stories on all the islands, they understand the environmental issues, they have met family and made friends from all islands, they are mindful of their actions and self-directed in education and giving back to the community. My husband is approximately 75-80% Native Hawaiian and is of the "lost generation" culturally speaking--he is literally learning his culture through his children.

Imagine as a parent you have to make the choice between cultural learning experience or missing school for a week at a time several times a year. On the one hand it is an easy decision and majority of the time the school was in support of that decision. Then I had a child with learning disabilities (who experiential learning is THAT much MORE important for!) who was struggling in school and the decision becomes that much harder.

Children are being ROBBED of summer time learning and memories. Summer camps, College prep programs, Na pua No'eau, Jr life guards, family trips etc. An entire generation ROBBED OF SUMMER. The best times of a child's life. And try to squeeze something in in-between of breaks--good luck--because the school calendar usually is not ready in time to coordinate dates when summer applications or planning would take place--due to the teachers' contract has not been ratified on time. Then one has to use the prior years' calendar for estimates and end up missing school for at least half a week anyways. CRAZY MAKING.

Who would have imagined that moving to a HAWAIIAN HOMES would mean giving up your child's primary source of cultural learning??!! There are three Hawaiian Homes Subdivisions in the Kapolei school district putting a large population of Hawaiian Children at risk.

Additional Unintended Consequences:

In actuality each child's "summer-break" is broken up into chunks of weeks throughout the entire school year. Many teachers presume to assign HOME WORK during these three week interval breaks--that is actually students' SUMMER TIME. We as a family are scrambling to cover bases during these "BREAKS". There are NO BREAK for me as a parent--MULTI-TRACK SCHEDULES ARE CRAZY MAKING and increase the demands and coordinating that are already on parents.

Safe and Affordable Child Care:

During traditional summer there are programs imbedded that provide affordable childcare such as Summer Fun. During the Multi-Track break there is only limited and very expensive private companies for child care. For us that was not an option. Majority of families in this area are nuclear families and do not have Tutu-Ma or Tutu-Pa on-demand to watch kids on breaks. Majority of families in this area have two parents working full-time. When we first entered this

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school system I grilled the administration, “how do they expect us to work??!?!...how do families do it!?!?” With blank faces they shrugged their shoulders. I will tell you what most do. Most parents instruct their children to stay inside at least during what would be school hours--FOR THE THREE WEEK BREAK. This means three weeks of no-supervision. Three weeks of TV and Video games. We cannot have 25% of the school population running around on the streets unsupervised all day. But what are we supposed to DO with them?? Even for parents who can modify work schedules somewhat or compromise and take some time off during breaks--who can take three weeks off of work every six weeks?? IT IS CRAZY MAKING.

Restricting Residency and Work Opportunities:

Our adult daughter had a need to move home with us last year but due to her job location/schedule and the age of her children she could not manage having them on a Multi-track system and was forced to keep them out of our home district. It was too much to bear and eventually she had to move out. Multi-track schools were literally a barrier to our daughter and grandchildren having a safe home to retreat to in their time of need. Circumstances have forced her to return to our home and put her children in the Kapolei Multi-track schools. We are scrambling to cover child-care and it is restricting when she can work—which is restricting her income and adding to her barriers as a single-mother.

The Multi-Track system literally restricts jobs and or residency options for families. If our children had been any younger we would have been closed out from the opportunity of having a Hawaiian Home.

Additional Expenses:

For families that are on free or reduced lunches the annual increased expenses of food and utilities covered on these three week “breaks” is a financial burden. Under a traditional schedule these children would be in summer programs with lunch programs--not home consuming additional food and electricity. These are realistic additional strains to already tight annual incomes for people.

Funding and Access Concerns:

The current middle and elementary schools are in walking distance of the Hawaiian homes. The Hawaiian homes are districted into the new elementary school which is about twice as far. This means additional funding for school bus service and limits children’s after school activity options. The Kapolei schools have been flagships of modern accommodations and design. Central AC, 52” flat screen TV’s in every classroom, full on-sight libraries and more. These schools were brought to the public attention through broad media coverage. I do not know any of the design plans for the new schools. My question is, the Hawaiian homes children are districted to the new schools--are the new schools going to be equipped with all the modern technology and conveniences as the existing Kapolei schools? Native people have been pushed to the margins, moved, and removed and consistently given a less-than status. When considering funding and planning for these new schools please insure that this precious population of Native Hawaiian children are given equal access to modern technology and conveniences.

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PLEASE VOTE AND SUPPLY NECESSARY FUNDING TO STOP MULTI-
TRACK SCHOOLS AND TRANSITION ALL OF OUR KEIKI AND OHANA BACK TO
SINGLE-TRACK CONGRUENT SCHOOL SCHEDULES.